GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3430
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2016
Import of Pulses
Jaunpuria Shri Sukhbir Singh;Mahto Dr. Banshilal;Raju Shri Gokaraju Ganga;Sawaikar Shri Advocate Narendra Keshav;Singh Shri Pashupati Nath;Singh Shri Ravneet;Tadas Shri Ramdas Chandrabhanji;Tanwar Shri Kanwar Singh;Thakur Shri Anurag Singh

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken a decision to increase buffer stock of pulses in view of their increasing prices and declining production and if so, the details thereof along with the norms fixed by the Government regarding procurement prices of pulses for buffer stock;
(b) whether the Government has imported pulses owing to the shortage in production thereof and if so, the details thereof along with the reasons for decline in the production of pulses in the country;
(c) the details of imports made in the last three years and the agencies which have been assigned with the job of importing pulses and sugar from abroad and the time by which the said imported pulses and sugar are likely to be made available in the market;
(d) whether the Government plans to distribute the imported pulses and other items like sugar from Post Offices and if so, the details thereof and the time by which the plan is going to be operationalise; and
(e) whether the Government is formulating any scheme/action plan to address the present shortfall in the production of pulses so as to increase the production and availability of pulses and check their rising prices and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY)

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(a) Yes Madam. Government has approved creation of buffer stock of upto 20 lakh tonnes of pulses through domestic procurement and imports. The pulses for the buffer are procured at market price if the prevailing market price is above Market Support Price (MSP) and at MSP if market price is below MSP.

(b) Government imported approximately 21.12 lakh tonnes of pulses during 2006-07 to 2010-11 under the 15% Subsidy scheme. In addition 5,000 MT of Tur dal was imported in 2015. During 2016, Government has contracted for import/imported 4.06 lakh tonnes of pulses as on 30.11.2016.
The decline in production of pulses in recent years is due to various factors which inter alia included adverse weather conditions, drought, unseasonal rains, lower crop area etc.

(c) Details of overall import of pulses and sugar including by private sector and government agencies is given in the table below:
Import of pulses and sugar (in MT)

YEAR	PULSES	SUGAR
2013-14	3643713	880956
2014-15	4584852	1538635
2015-16	5797706	1943125
2016-17 (Upto Oct 2016)	2748473	1104847

Source: DGCIS
For building the buffer stock of up to 20 lakh tonnes, Government through MMTC and STC has contracted for import/imported 4.06 lakh tonnes during the 2016-17 out of which 81,985 metric tonnes of pulses have already arrived in the country. Release of pulses from the buffer stock is made by Government depending on their price and availability situation.
In case of sugar, Central Government has neither imported sugar on its own nor assigned any agency to import sugar during last three sugar seasons.

(d) No plan specific to distribution of imported pulses and other items like sugar through Post Offices is under consideration at present.

(e) In order to increase production of pulses, Government is implementing several Crop Development Schemes/Programmes such as National Food Security Mission-Pulses (NFSM-Pulses), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), Macro Management of Agriculture (MMA) and Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm & Maize (ISOPOM). National Food Security Mission was further strengthened from 1.4.2010 with the merger of pulses component of ISOPOM. In addition, "Accelerated Pulses Production Programme (A3P)" was started under NFSM in 2010-11 to take up active propagation of key technologies in the form of block demonstrations for improving productivity of pulses.
The measures taken to moderate the rising prices of pulses are given at the Annexure.

ANNEXURE

STATEMENT REFERRED IN REPLY TO PART (e) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3430 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 6.12.2016 REGARDING IMPORT OF PULSES

Measures Taken by the Government to moderate rising prices of pulses are:

I. Export of all pulses is banned except kabuli channa and up to 10,000 MTs in organic pulses and lentils.
II. Import of pulses are allowed at zero import duty.
III. Stock limit on pulses extended till 30.9.2017.
IV. MSP raised for kharif pulses of 2016-17 for Tur, Urad and Moong as well as for Rabi pulses of Gram and Masoor for season 2016-17.
V. Government has released around 48,660.285 MT of pulses from the buffer stock to the States or through Central Agencies at subsidized rates for retailing at reasonable rates to improve availability and stabilize prices.
VI. Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has banned new contracts in Chana to dampen speculative activities in Chana and in respect of running contracts in Chana disallowed taking fresh positions to reduce speculative activities.
VII. Strict vigilance by Directorate of Revenue Intelligence to prevent importers from mis-using the facilities of Customs Bonded Warehouse facility.
VIII. Setting up of a Group of Officers for regular monitoring and exchange of information on hoarding, cartelization etc.
IX. About 1.40 lakh tonnes pf pulses seized from 14612 raids and disposed of 1.28 lakh tonnes either by auction or other means permitted under EC Act, 1955.